



NEWS

Federal Communications Commission

1919 - M Street, N.W.

Washington, D. C. 20554

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This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action. See MCI v. FCC, 515 F 2d 385 (D.C. Circ 1974).

Report No. IN 98- 68 INTERNATIONAL ACTION December 15, 1998

U.S. AND MEXICO REACH AGREEMENT ON THE USE OF DIGITAL MDS AND ITFS SYSTEMS ALONG THE U.S./MEXICO BORDER

The United States and Mexico have reached agreement on the operation of digital Multipoint Distribution Service (MDS) and Instructional Television Fixed Service (ITFS) systems along the U.S.-Mexico border area. These video distribution services provide a form of wireless cable, with the MDS service available on a subscription basis and the ITFS service for use within educational institutions. Under this agreement, the existing *Agreement Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the United Mexican States Concerning the Assignment of Frequencies and Usage of the 2500-2686 MHz Band Along the United States-Mexico Border*, signed August 11, 1992, which covers analog MDS and ITFS systems, will be amended to also cover digital systems. The amendments provide notification and coordination procedures for digital MDS and ITFS systems and threshold technical parameters for such systems.

The new agreement will allow MDS operators, educational institutions and the public to enjoy the benefits of digital technology, including improved quality, greater diversity of services and more efficient spectrum use. In commenting on the agreement, Andrew Kreig, President and CEO of the Wireless Communications Association International (WCA) stated, "We're delighted at the news, which will allow the benefits of advanced digital wireless services to be enjoyed by residents, students, businesses and other users on the border, encouraging their growth and prosperity ... for the benefit of all." FCC Chairman William E. Kennard stated that "this agreement represents a major step forward in the cooperative efforts of Mexico and the U.S. to bring the benefits of digital services to consumers quickly."

The amendments were adopted through an exchange of diplomatic notes and will enter into force after both parties indicate that they have complied with any national legislative requirements, a process that is expected to be completed within the next month. Information on the amended agreement has been placed on file at the International Bureau Reference Room located on the first floor of 2000 M St. N.W. Copies are also available from the International Transcription Service at (202) 857-3800 and can be downloaded from the FCC's International Bureau internet site at



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<http://www.fcc.gov/ib/pnd/agree>.

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